

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A file storage system, comprising:

a plurality of system servers connected to one another by a communication network having at least one node, wherein each system server includes at least one process that provides a file storage system function independent of the states of other system servers in response to a request to the file storage system that may affect multiple system servers, and wherein the file storage system functions include:

at least one file storage gateway service that includes a plurality of file storage gateway servers, each file storage gateway server hosting at least one client process that can process client requests and pass the resulting set of requests to the file storage system and including a process that may access at least one server directory to determine the location of a system server that can service a generated client request;

at least one file data storage server service that includes a plurality of file data storage servers, each file data storage server including a process that accesses files file data storage objects stored in the storage system independent of the files file data storage objects accessed by other file data storage servers; and

at least one file metadata service that includes a plurality of file metadata servers, each file metadata server including a process that accesses a set of file metadata independent of the file metadata sets accessed by other file metadata servers;

wherein the at least one instance of a file data storage server service and at least one instance of a file metadata service are separate from each other such that the services are scalable independently of each other; and

wherein the at least one file storage gateway service is capable of locating a file metadata server corresponding to a file in response to a request, receiving metadata for the file from the located file metadata server, and locating one or more corresponding file data storage servers for the file using the received metadata, wherein the file metadata server and file data storage server are separate and independent from each other.

Claims 2-5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (currently amended): The file storage system of claim 1, further including:

at least one server directory that includes location information and service capabilities of the system servers, the at least one server directory providing at least one server location in response to a request to the file storage system.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The file storage system of claim 1, further including:

a routing request server that provides system server location information in response to a request to the storage system, the location information corresponding to a system server that is capable of servicing the request.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A file storage system, comprising:

a plurality of servers arranged into at least two services, each service providing different file storage system functions independent of the status of any other service, and the servers of each service being functionally de-coupled from one another, servicing requests, which may affect multiple servers, independent of the operation of other servers of the service, the services including:

a file data storage server service comprising a plurality of file data storage servers that provide access to files stored in the file storage system, each file data

storage server including an initialize function that may provide file data storage server location and file data storage server capability information, and

a file metadata service comprising a plurality of file metadata servers that provide access to metadata for files stored in the file storage system, each file metadata server including an initialize function that may provide file metadata server location and file metadata server capability information; and

a server directory process that receives information for a file storage system request and server location and capability information from the file data storage and file metadata servers, and that provides information to locate a server capable of servicing the request;

wherein at least one instance of a file data storage server service and at least one instance of a file metadata service are separate from each other such that the services independently of each other.

Claims 9-10 (canceled)

Claim 11 (currently amended): The file storage system of claim 8, wherein:
the file metadata server capability information includes a quality of service value.

Claim 12 (canceled)

Claim 13 (currently amended): The file storage system of claim 8, wherein:
the storage server capability information includes a set of files accessible by the file data storage server.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The file storage system of claim 8, further including:

a plurality of file storage gateway servers, each file storage gateway server including a process that can access the server directory process to determine a location of a server capable of servicing a request and then access the server at the location to service the request, wherein the file storage gateway servers are capable of locating a file metadata server corresponding to a file in response to a request, receiving metadata for the file from the located file metadata server, and locating one or more corresponding file data storage servers for the file using the received metadata, wherein the file metadata server and file data storage server are separate and independent from each other.

Claims 15-20 (canceled)